



The  
Patent  
Office

23



PCT/GB 99701963

1999



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

S

GB 99/01963

REC'D 14 JUL 1999	
WIPO	PCT

The Patent Office  
Concept House  
Cardiff Road  
Newport  
South Wales  
NP9 1RH

09/720941

I, the undersigned, being an officer **09/720941** authorised in accordance with Section 74(1) and (4) of the Deregulation & Contracting Out Act 1994, to sign and issue certificates on behalf of the Comptroller-General, hereby certify that annexed hereto is a true copy of the documents as originally filed in connection with the patent application identified therein.

In accordance with the Patents (Companies Re-registration) Rules 1982, if a company named in this certificate and any accompanying documents has re-registered under the Companies Act 1980 with the same name as that with which it was registered immediately before re-registration save for the substitution as, or inclusion as, the last part of the name of the words "public limited company" or their equivalents in Welsh, references to the name of the company in this certificate and any accompanying documents shall be treated as references to the name with which it is so re-registered.

In accordance with the rules, the words "public limited company" may be replaced by p.l.c., plc, P.L.C. or PLC.

Re-registration under the Companies Act does not constitute a new legal entity but merely subjects the company to certain additional company law rules.

**PRIORITY  
DOCUMENT**

SUBMITTED OR TRANSMITTED IN  
COMPLIANCE WITH RULE 17.1(a) OR (b)

Signed

*R. Manonay*

Dated 11 May 1999

**Best Available Copy**

**This Page Blank (uspto)**

---

Patents Act 1977  
(Rule 16)

02 JUL 1998

03JUL98 E372934-4 D02982  
P01/77/00 25.00 - 9814368.8

**Request for grant of a patent**

(See the notes on the back of this form. You can also get an explanatory leaflet from the Patent Office to help you fill in this form)

The Patent Office

Cardiff Road  
Newport  
Gwent NP9 1RH

1.	Your reference	SJA/50479/000		
2.	P C	<b>9814368.8</b>		<b>-2 JUL 1998</b>
3.	Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant ( <i>underline all surnames</i> )	<b>RECKITT &amp; COLMAN PRODUCTS LIMITED</b>  <b>and</b>  <b>UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON</b>		
	Patents ADP number ( <i>if you know it</i> )			
	If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation	(see continuation sheet for applicants' addresses)		
4.	Title of the invention	<b>INHALATION OF AEROSOL ACTIVES</b>		
5.	Name of your agent ( <i>if you have one</i> )	<b>BOULT WADE TENNANT</b>		
	"Address for service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent ( <i>including the postcode</i> )	<b>27 FURNIVAL STREET</b>		
	Patents ADP number ( <i>if you know it</i> )	<b>LONDON</b>		
		<b>EC4A 1PQ</b>		
		<b>42001</b> ✓		
6.	If you are declaring priority from one or more earlier patent applications, give the country and the date of filing of the or of each of these earlier applications and ( <i>if you know it</i> ) the or each application number	Country	Priority application number ( <i>if you know it</i> )	Date of filing ( <i>day/month/year</i> )
7.	If this application is divided or otherwise derived from an earlier UK application, give the number and the filing date of the earlier application	Number of earlier application	Date of filing ( <i>day / month / year</i> )	
8.	Is a statement of inventorship and of right to grant of a patent required in support of this request? (Answer 'Yes' if: a) any applicant named in part 3 is not an inventor, or b) there is an inventor who is not named as an applicant, or c) any named applicant is a corporate body. See note (d))	Yes		

## Patents Form 1/77

9. Enter the number of sheets for any of the following items you are filing with this form. Do not count copies of the same document

Continuation sheets of this form 1 ✓  
Description 12 ✓  
Claim(s) 3 ✓  
Abstract  
Drawing(s) 3 + 3 ✓

10. If you are also filing any of the following, state how many against each item.

Priority documents  
Translations of priority documents  
Statement of inventorship and right to grant of a patent (*Patents Form 7/77*)  
Request for preliminary examination and search (*Patents Form 9/77*) 1 ✓  
Request for substantive examination (*Patents Form 10/77*)  
Any other documents (*Please specify*)

Best Available Copy

11. I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.

Signature

Date

Bulk Wade Temax

2nd July 1998

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom S.J. ALLARD  
0171 404 5921

### Warning

*After an application for a patent has been filed, the Comptroller of the Patent Office will consider whether publication or communication of the invention should be prohibited or restricted under Section 22 of the Patents Act 1977. You will be informed if it is necessary to prohibit or restrict your invention in this way. Furthermore, if you live in the United Kingdom, Section 23 of the Patents Act 1977 stops you from applying for a patent abroad without first getting written permission from the Patent Office unless an application has been filed at least 6 weeks beforehand in the United Kingdom for a patent for the same invention and either no direction prohibiting publication or communication has been given, or any such direction has been revoked.*

### Notes

- a) If you need help to fill in this form or you have any questions, please contact the Patent Office on 01645 500505.  
b) Write your answers in capital letters using black ink or you may type them.  
c) If there is not enough space for all the relevant details on any part of this form, please continue on a separate sheet of paper and write "see continuation sheet" in the relevant part(s). Any continuation sheet should be attached to this form.  
d) If you have answered 'Yes' Patents Form 7/77 will need to be filed.  
e) Once you have filled in the form you must remember to sign and date it.  
f) For details of the fee and ways to pay please contact the Patent Office.

Continuation Sheet

Patents Form 1/77

RECIPIENT & COLMAN PRODUCTS LIMITED

One Burlington Lane,

London,

W4 2RW,

United Kingdom

681429001

and

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

Highfield,

Southampton,

SO17 1BJ,

United Kingdom

798470001

Best Available Copy

INHALATION OF AEROSOL ACTIVES

The present invention relates to a method of reducing the inhalation of compositions which are sprayed into the atmosphere, in particular those which are sprayed from an aerosol spray device.

Aerosols spray compositions produce potential health/breathing hazards through the inhalation of the spray particles or droplets. It is known that, for example, so-called PM10 particles (herein defined as those particles with a particle size of less than 10 micrometres) are capable of travelling deep into the respiratory tract. A typical aerosol spray device will produce liquid droplets with a range of droplet diameters, but usually a proportion of the droplets have a droplet diameter of less than 10 micrometres.

We have now developed a method whereby the inhalation of aerosol compositions can be reduced.

According to the present invention there is provided a method of reducing the inhalation of airborne/respirable particles or droplets having a diameter of less than 10 micrometres, produced by spraying liquid droplets from a spray device, which method comprises imparting a unipolar charge to the liquid droplets by double layer charging during the spraying of the droplets from a spray device, the unipolar charge being at a level such that the droplets have a charge to mass ratio of at least  $\pm 1 \times 10^{-4}$  C/kg, whereby at least 75% by volume of the airborne respirable particles or droplets having a diameter of less than 10 micrometres in the vicinity of the mouth, nose or upper respiratory tract do not enter the lungs.

It is preferred that the unipolar charge which is imparted to the liquid droplets is generated solely by

the interaction between the liquid within the spray device and the spray device itself as the liquid is sprayed therefrom. In particular, it is preferred that the manner in which a unipolar charge is imparted to the liquid droplets does not rely even partly upon the connection of the spray device to any external charge inducing device, such as an external source of relatively high voltage. With such an arrangement, the spray device is entirely self-contained making it suitable for use both in industrial, institutional and domestic situations.

Preferably the spray device is an aerosol spray device, in particular an aerosol spray device for domestic use in the form of a hand-held aerosol can. Preferably, therefore the charge to mass ratio of at least  $\pm 1 \times 10^{-4}$  C/kg is imparted to the liquid droplets as a result of the use of an aerosol spray device with at least one of the features of the material of the actuator, the size and shape of the orifice of the actuator, the diameter of the dip tube, the characteristics of the valve and the formulation of the composition contained within the aerosol spray device being chosen in order to achieve the said droplet charge to mass ratio by double layer charging imparting the unipolar charge to the droplets during the actual spraying of the liquid droplets from the orifice of the aerosol spray device.

As a result of the method of the present invention, the liquid droplets which form the aerosol spray produced by the spray device carry an electrostatic charge. The charged droplets will seek to disperse as a result of mutual repulsion and will preferentially move towards surfaces having an opposite or a neutral charge, such as the face, nose or upper respiratory tract, rather than penetrating

into the lungs of humans or animals in the vicinity of the aerosol spray.

The method of the present invention has application in connection with all or most aerosol spray devices in current use, examples being paint aerosols, antiperspirants, hair sprays, insecticides, horticultural products, air fresheners, waxes and polishes, oven cleaners, starches and fabric finishes, shoe and leather care products, glass cleaners and various other household, institutional, professional or industrial products.

The method of the present invention prevents at least 75%, preferably at least 85%, and more preferably at least 95% by volume of the airborne particles having a size of less than 10 micrometres from entering the lungs.

The airborne particles may either comprise the liquid droplets per se, or may comprise particles which are produced as the droplets break up or evaporate after spraying.

In general, the liquid composition which is sprayed into the air using the spray device is a water and hydrocarbon mixture, or emulsion, or a liquid which is converted into an emulsion by shaking the spraying device before use, or during the spraying process.

While all liquid aerosols are known to carry a net negative or positive charge as a result of double layer charging, or the fragmentation of liquid droplets, the charge imparted to droplets of liquid sprayed from standard devices is only of the order of  $\pm 1 \times 10^{-8}$  to  $1 \times 10^{-5}$  C/kg.

The invention relies on combining various characteristics of an aerosol spray device so as to increase the charging of the liquid as it is sprayed



from the aerosol spray device.

A typical aerosol spray device comprises:

1. An aerosol can containing the composition to be sprayed from the device and a liquid or gaseous propellant;
2. A dip tube extending into the can, the upper end of the dip tube being connected to a valve;
3. An actuator situated above the valve which is capable of being depressed in order to operate the valve; and
4. An insert provided in the actuator comprising an orifice from which the composition is sprayed.

A preferred aerosol device for use in the present invention is that described in GB 9722611.2 filed 28th October, 1997.

It is possible to impart higher charges to the liquid droplets by choosing aspects of the aerosol device including the material, shape and dimensions of the actuator, the actuator insert, the valve and the dip tube and the characteristics of the liquid which is to be sprayed, so that the required level of charge is generated as the liquid is dispersed as droplets.

A number of characteristics of the aerosol system ~~increase double layer charging and charge exchange~~ between the liquid formulation and the surface of the aerosol system. Such increases are brought about by factors which may increase the turbulence of the flow through the system, and increase the frequency and velocity of contact between the liquid and the internal surface of the container and valve and actuator system.

By way of example, characteristics of the actuator can be optimised to increase the charge

levels on the liquid sprayed from the container. A smaller orifice in the actuator insert, of a size of 0.45mm or less, increase the charge levels of the liquid sprayed through the actuator. The choice of material for the actuator can also increase the charge levels on the liquid sprayed from the device with material such as nylon, polyester, acetal, PVC and polypropylene tending to increase the charge levels. The geometry of the orifice in the insert can be optimised to increase the charge levels on the liquid as it is sprayed through the actuator. Inserts which promote the mechanical break-up of the liquid give better charging.

The actuator insert of the spray device may be formed from a conducting, insulating, semi-conducting or static-dissipative material.

The characteristics of the dip tube can be optimised to increase charge levels in the liquid sprayed from the container. A narrow dip tube, of for example about 1.27mm internal diameter, increases the charge levels on the liquid, and the dip tube material can also be changed to increase charge.

Valve characteristics can be selected which increase the charge to mass ratio of the liquid product as it is sprayed from the container. A small tailpiece orifice in the housing, of about 0.65mm, increases the charge to mass ratio during spraying. A reduced number of holes in the stem, for example 2 x 0.50mm, also increases the charge during spray. The presence of a vapour phase tap helps to maximise the charge levels, a larger orifice vapour phase tap of, for example, about 0.50mm to 1.0mm generally giving higher charge levels.

Changes in the product formulation can also affect charging levels. A formulation containing a

5 mixture of hydrocarbon and water, or an emulsion of an immiscible hydrocarbon and water, will carry a higher charge to mass ratio when sprayed from the aerosol device than either a water alone or hydrocarbon alone formulation.

It is preferred that a liquid composition of use in the present invention comprises an oil phase, an aqueous phase, a surfactant and a propellant.

10 Preferably the oil phase includes  $C_9 - C_{12}$  hydrocarbon which is preferably present in the composition in an amount of from 2 to 10% w/w.

Preferably the surfactant is glyceryl oleate or polyglycerol oleate, preferably present in the composition in an amount of from 0.1 to 1.0% w/w.

15 Preferably the propellant is liquified petroleum gas (LPG) which is preferably butane, optionally in admixture with propane. The propellant may be present in an amount of from 10 to 90% w/w depending upon whether the composition is intended for spraying as a  
20 "wet" or as a "dry" composition. For a "wet" composition, the propellant is preferably present in an amount of from 20 to 50% w/w, more preferably in an amount of from 30 to 40% w/w.

25 The liquid droplets sprayed from the aerosol spray device will generally have diameters in the range of from 5 to 100 micrometres, with a peak of droplets of about 40 micrometres. The liquid which is sprayed from the aerosol spray device may contain a predetermined amount of a particulate material, for  
30 example, fumed silica, or a predetermined amount of a volatile solid material, such as menthol or naphthalene.

A can for a typical aerosol spray device is formed of aluminium or lacquered or unlacquered tin  
35 plate or the like. The actuator insert may be formed

of, for instance, acetal resin. The valve stem lateral opening may typically be in the form of two apertures of diameters 0.51mm.

5 The present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic cross section through an aerosol spraying apparatus in accordance with the invention;

10 Figure 2 is a diagrammatic cross section through the valve assembly of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a cross section through the actuator insert of the assembly shown in Figure 2;

15 Figure 4 shows the configuration of the bore of the spraying head shown in Figure 3 when viewed in the direction A; and

Figure 5 shows the configuration of the swirl chamber of the spraying head shown in Figure 3 when viewed in the direction B.

20 Referring to Figures 1 and 2, an aerosol spray device in accordance with the invention is shown. It comprises a can 1, formed of aluminium or lacquered or unlacquered tin plate or the like in conventional manner, defining a reservoir 2 for a liquid 3 having a conductivity such that droplets of the liquid can  
25 ~~carry an appropriate electrostatic charge. Also~~  
located in the can is a gas under pressure which is capable of forcing the liquid 3 out of the can 1 via a conduit system comprising a dip tube 4 and a valve and  
30 actuator assembly 5. The dip tube 4 includes one end 6 which terminates at a bottom peripheral part of the can 1 and another end 7 which is connected to a tailpiece 8 of the valve assembly. The tailpiece 8 is secured by a mounting assembly 9 fitted in an opening  
35 in the top of the can and includes a lower portion 10

defining a tailpiece orifice 11 to which end 7 of the dip tube 4 is connected. The tailpiece includes a bore 12 of relatively narrow diameter at lower portion 11 and a relatively wider diameter at its upper portion 13. The valve assembly also includes a stem pipe 14 mounted within the bore 12 of the tailpiece and arranged to be axially displaced within the bore 12 against the action of spring 15. The valve stem 14 includes an internal bore 16 having one or more lateral openings (stem holes) 17 (see Figure 2). The valve assembly includes an actuator 18 having a central bore 19 which accommodates the valve stem 14 such that the bore 16 of the stem pipe 14 is in communication with bore 19 of the actuator. A passage 20 in the actuator extending perpendicularly to the bore 19 links the bore 19 with a recess including a post 21 on which is mounted a spraying head in the form of an insert 22 including a bore 23 which is in communication with the passage 20.

A ring 24 of elastomeric material is provided between the outer surface of the valve stem 14 and, ordinarily, this sealing ring closes the lateral opening 17 in the valve stem 14. The construction of the valve assembly is such that when the actuator 18 is manually depressed, it urges the valve stem 14 downwards against the action of the spring 15 as shown in Figure 2 so that the sealing ring 24 no longer closes the lateral opening 17. In this position, a path is provided from the reservoir 2 to the bore 23 of the spraying head so that liquid can be forced, under the pressure of the gas in the can, to the spraying head via a conduit system comprising the dip tube 4, the tailpiece bore 12, the valve stem bore 16, the actuator bore 19 and the passage 20.

An orifice 27 (not shown in Figure 1) is provided

in the wall of the tailpiece 8 and constitutes a vapour phase tap whereby the gas pressure in the reservoir 2 can act directly on the liquid flowing through the valve assembly. This increases the turbulence of the liquid. It has been found that an increased charge is provided if the diameter of the orifice 27 is at least 0.76mm.

Preferably the lateral opening 17 linking the valve stem bore 16 to the tailpiece bore 12 is in the form of 2 orifices each having a diameter of not more than 0.51mm to enhance electrostatic charge generation. Further, the diameter of the dip tube 4 is preferably as small as possible, for example, 1.2mm, in order to increase the charge imparted to the liquid. Also, charge generation is enhanced if the diameter of the tailpiece orifice 11 is as small as possible eg not more than about 0.64mm.

Referring now to Figure 3, there is shown on an increased scale, a cross section through the actuator insert of the apparatus of Figures 1 and 2. For simplicity, the bore 23 is shown as a single cylindrical aperture in this Figure. However, the bore 23 preferably has the configuration, for instance, shown in Figure 4. The apertures of the bore 23 are denoted by reference numeral 31 and the aperture-defining portions of the bore are denoted by reference numeral 30. The total peripheral length of the aperture-defining portions at the bore outlet is denoted by  $L$  (in mm) and  $a$  is the total area of the aperture at the bore outlet (in  $\text{mm}^2$ ) and the values for  $L$  and  $a$  are as indicated in Figure 4.  $L/a$  exceeds 8 and this condition has been found to be particularly conducive to charge development because it signifies an increased contact area between the actuator insert and the liquid passing there through.

Many different configurations can be adopted in order to produce a high  $L/a$  ratio without the cross-sectional area  $a$  being reduced to a value which would allow only low liquid flow rates. Thus, for example

5 it is possible to use actuator insert bore configurations (i) wherein the bore outlet comprises a plurality of segment-like apertures (with or without a central aperture); (ii) wherein the outlet comprises a plurality of sector-like apertures; (iii) wherein the

10 aperture together form an outlet in the form of a grill or grid; (iv) wherein the outlet is generally cruciform; (v) wherein the apertures together define an outlet in the form of concentric rings; and combinations of these configurations. Particularly

15 preferred are actuator insert bore configurations wherein a tongue like portion protrudes into the liquid flow stream and can be vibrated thereby. This vibrational property may cause turbulent flow and enhanced electrostatic charge separation of the double

20 layer, allowing more charge to move into the bulk of the liquid.

Referring now to Figure 5, there is shown a plan view of one possible configuration of swirl chamber 35 of the actuator insert 22. The swirl chamber includes

25 4 lateral channels 36 equally spaced and tangential to a central area 37 surrounding the bore 23. In use,

---

the liquid driven from the reservoir 2 by the gas under pressure travels along passage 20 and strikes the channels 36 normal to the longitudinal axis of the

30 channels. The arrangement of the channels is such that the liquid tends to follow a circular motion prior to entering the central area 37 and thence the bore 23. As a consequence, the liquid is subjected to substantial turbulence which enhances the

35 electrostatic charge in the liquid.

The following Example illustrates the invention:-

EXAMPLE

5           An air freshener formulation was produced as follows:-

          83% by weight of an iso paraffin solvent was introduced into a mixing vessel and stirred. 0.2% by weight of butyl hydroxy toluene was added to the  
10       vessel as a corrosion inhibitor and stirring was continued until a homogenous mixture was obtained. Thereafter, in turn, 5% by weight of polyglycerol oleate emulsifier and 11.8% by weight of a fragrance component were added and stirring was again continued  
15       until a homogeneous mixture had been produced.

          The mixture constituted the oil phase of the final product. 6% by weight of this oil phase was placed in a tin plated aerosol can of the type as described with reference to Figures 1 and 2, having a  
20       spraying head bore configuration as shown in Figure 4 and a spraying head swirl chamber configuration as shown in Figure 5. The actuator insert was formed of acetal resin.

          The valve stem lateral opening 17 was in the form  
25       of 2 apertures of diameter 0.51mm, the vapour phase tap orifice 27 had a diameter of 0.76mm, the tail pipe orifice 11 had a diameter of 0.64mm and the diameter of the dip tube 4 was 3mm. 59% by weight of soft water was then added to the can and thereafter the  
30       valve assembly was fitted onto the can. 35% by weight of butane was introduced into the can via the valve assembly to achieve a pressure of 40 psi.

          On depression of the actuator 18, a fine spray of liquid droplets having a charge/mass value of  $-1 \times 10^{-4}$   
35       C/kg and a flow rate of approximately 1.5 g/sec was



obtained. The droplets became rapidly dispersed in the air.

5 The above-described aerosol spray device was compared with a standard, known aerosol spray device loaded with the same air freshener formulation. It was found that, for the same amount of spraying, the quantity of liquid droplets inhaled was significantly less with the above-described device compared with the standard, known device.

---

**CLAIMS:**

1. A method of reducing the inhalation of airborne/respirable particles or droplets having a diameter of less than 10 micrometres, produced by spraying liquid droplets from a spray device, which method comprises imparting a unipolar charge to the liquid droplets by double layer charging during the spraying of the droplets from a spray device, the unipolar charge being at a level such that the droplets have a charge to mass ratio of at least  $\pm 1 \times 10^{-4}$  C/kg, whereby at least 75% by volume of the airborne respirable particles or droplets having a diameter of less than 10 micrometres in the vicinity of the mouth, nose or upper respiratory tract do not enter the lungs.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 in which the spray device is an aerosol spray device.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 in which the spray device contains an emulsion.

4. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the liquid droplets have a size in the range of from 5 to 100 micrometres.

---

5. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the spray device contains a composition comprising an oil phase, an aqueous phase, a surfactant and a propellant.

6. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein the oil phase includes a  $C_9 - C_{12}$  hydrocarbon.

7. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein the  $C_9 - C_{12}$  hydrocarbon is present in the composition in an amount of from 2 to 10% w/w.

5 8. A method as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 7 wherein the surfactant is glyceryl oleate or a polyglycerol oleate.

10 9. A method as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 8 wherein the surfactant is present in the composition in an amount of from 0.1 to 1.0% w/w.

15 10. A method as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 9 wherein the propellant is liquified petroleum gas.

20 11. A method as claimed in claim 10 wherein the propellant is present in the composition in an amount of from 20 to 50% w/w.

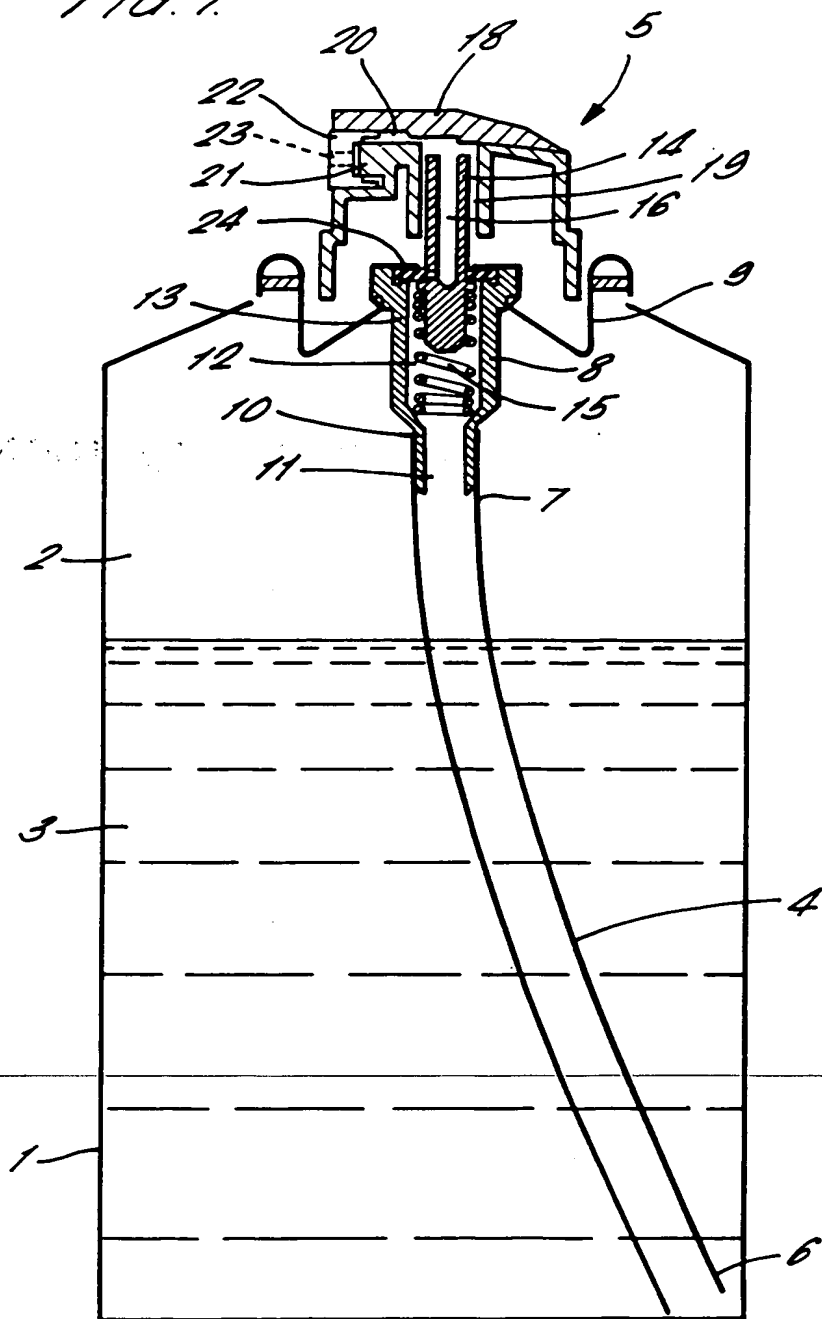
25 12. A method as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the charge to mass ratio of at least  $\pm 1 \times 10^{-4}$  C/kg is imparted to the liquid droplets as a result of the use of an aerosol spray device with at least one of the features of the material of the actuator, the size and shape of the orifice of the actuator, the diameter of the dip tube, the characteristics of the valve and the formulation of the composition contained within the aerosol spray device being chosen in order to achieve the said droplet charge to mass ratio by double layer charging imparting the unipolar charge to the droplets during the actual spraying of the liquid droplets from the orifice of the aerosol spray device.

35

13. A method of reducing the inhalation of droplets produced from a spray device, the method being substantially as herein described with reference to the Example.

---

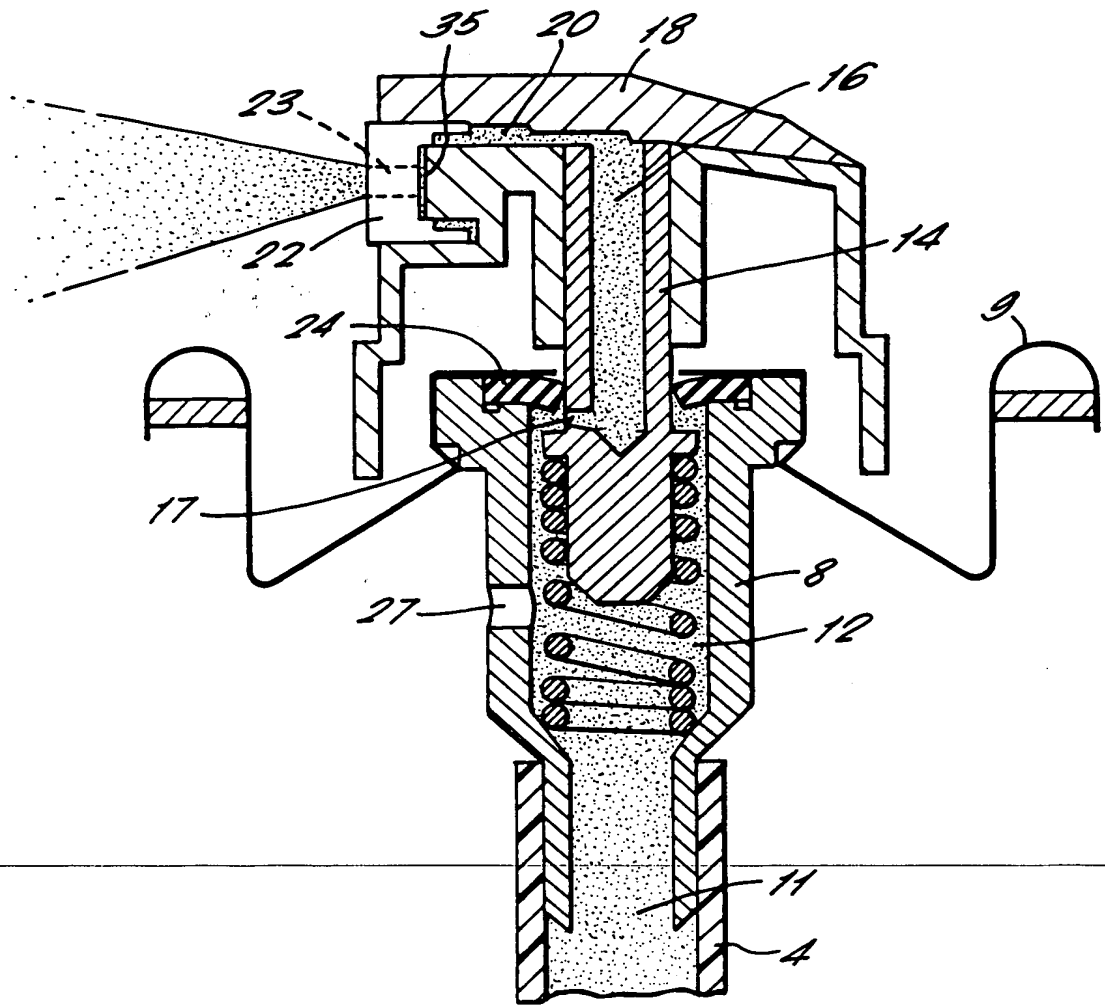
FIG. 1



**This Page Blank (uspto)**

---

FIG. 2.



**This Page Blank (uspto)**

---



3/3

FIG. 3.

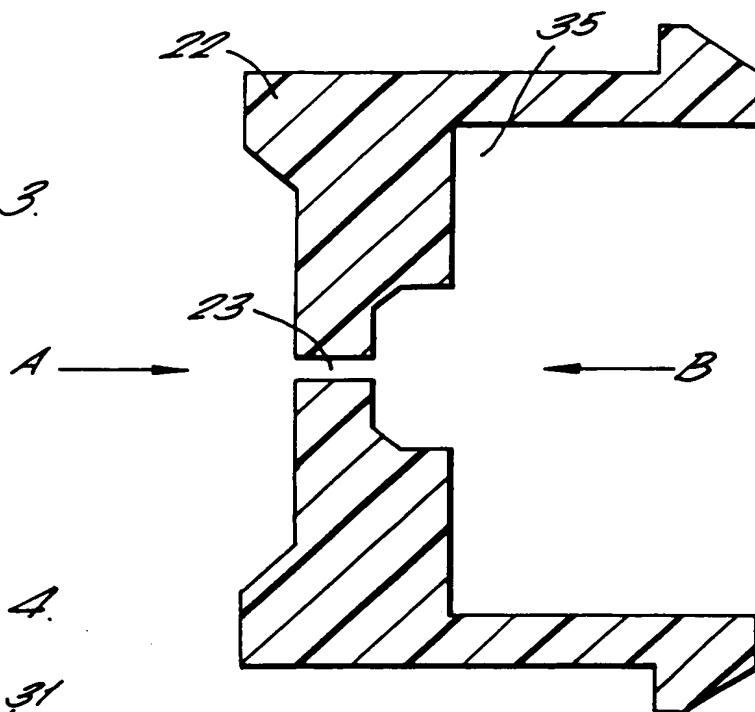


FIG. 4.

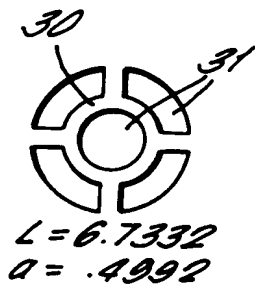
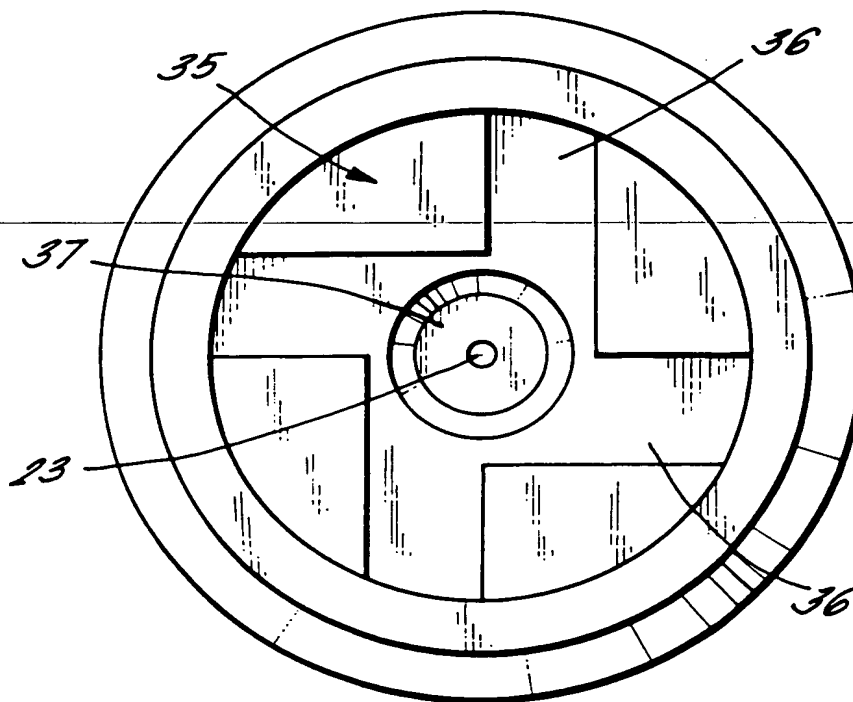


FIG. 5.



**This Page Blank (uspto)**

---